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STAINED GLASS WINDOWS

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AN ESSAY

WITH A REPORT TO THE
VESTRY ON STAINED GLASS
WINDOWS FOR GRACE CHURCH
LOCKPORT NEW YORK.***BY
WILLIAM FREDERIC FABER.***



LOCKPORT NEW YORK

MCM

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NOTE.


The first edition of the *Report on Stained Glass Windows for Grace Church, Lockport*, which appeared in January, 1897, is now exhausted; as there is a constant demand for it, a second is deemed necessary; and the occasion seemed favorable for a little further talk about Windows and Glass. Hence this pamphlet.

The project of four years ago is no longer an insubstantial dream. Since that time eleven windows and three mosaics have been placed in Grace Church; in them all the adopted scheme has been followed, with results more and more obviously satisfactory.

Although intending this pamphlet, in the first instance, simply for a guide to his own people, to lead them to a more discriminating appreciation: the author is encouraged to hope, by many expressions from the outside, that it will, even more than the earlier *Report*, be of service beyond his parish; that it may perhaps stimulate elsewhere also a study of Church Glass, and the erection of true Church Windows.

W. F. F.

Grace Church Rectory, Lockport, All Saints',
1900.



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STAINED GLASS WINDOWS.

The subject is certainly one of present interest. The advertisements of firms who produce stained glass windows are numerous and conspicuous in our Church weeklies; glowing accounts of memorials just erected in this place and that make up a large part of our "Diocesan News." To say nothing of the fact that we are in danger of forgetting what the real business of the Church is,—that it is not primarily to build and beautify edifices, but to save men and to establish righteousness in the earth; the uncomfortable question is forced upon us: For how much of this "embellishment" of our churches will posterity thank us?

A revival of religious art we welcome with profound gratitude. But when for the moment it threatens to take the form of an epidemic of stained glass, our joy may be turned to apprehension. Stained glass is simply becoming fashionable; everybody is beginning to want some of it because 'all the other churches are getting some;' commercial enterprise stimulates a well-meaning zeal, taking advantage, too, of a vulgar spirit of rivalry; and the end thereof must be painful to contemplate. Individuals are often given a free

hand in God's House on the ground that thus several hundred or several thousand dollars will be secured for "enrichment;" and so the work goes merrily on.

And such things can be because there is a lack of knowledge. Persons may have the best intention in the world; their experience in other, different fields may have been very wide; in a general way they may have good taste; moreover, they may possess a long purse and a liberal disposition; perhaps they may think to save themselves from going wrong by putting the whole matter into the hands of strongly advertised window-makers. But none of these things will supply the lack of a knowledge of stained glass. There is nothing for it but study and education. The clergy first of all, and after them the vestries, must inform themselves on the subject as thoroughly as possible. In the meantime, let them be slow to lend themselves to anything which they later, or those who come after them, might bitterly deplore and be helpless to remedy.

Nor is it to-day so forbidding a task to get this knowledge as it was but a few years ago. Then one had to go to the libraries in our largest cities, and laboriously gather from rare works the history and principles of this art. Now there is fortunately at least one single volume, easily obtainable, which may serve as a

text-book to all who desire to study the subject. Mr. Lewis F. Day has given us in his *Windows: A Book about Stained and Painted Glass*, published in London, 1897, by B. T. Batsford, imported by the Scribners, just that information which is needed. No vestry that has the matter of Stained Glass Memorials before it should permit its rector to be without this book; he should read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest it; but not he only; they also, at least the members of any committee responsible for such work; and intending donors likewise, who desire to have a controlling voice in regard to memorials to be erected. This is too important a thing to enter upon recklessly or at the dictation of mere fancy.

Meanwhile it may not be out of place to tell briefly and simply what stained glass windows in a church ought to be; and what stained glass itself is.

Stained glass windows are still, after all, windows: and windows are essential component parts of a building. If in a church, the axiom applies the more inevitably: a church is a building presumed to conform rigidly to a certain type; and therefore, the idea which the whole is to exhibit and impress must not for a moment be hidden or dissipated by any component part.

Our dwelling houses may be often built in a haphazard way, with a view simply to utility, regardless of style, laying no claim to architectural art. But to build a church so is an offense, an offense to art, and, we believe, an offense to religion also. A church building is presumed and expected to have a certain character, technically called "style," dignifying and elevating God's House above our common houses, even though it be small and plain and not costly; small and plain it may be, and not costly, but it must not be tawdry or incongruous or mean.

Now a window is, as we have said, a component part of the building. In a church well conceived, the window is inevitable just as it is: to make it larger or smaller, to close one up where now there is one or to make one where there is none, is just so far to do violence to the building. If such a change does not violate the integrity of the building as a whole, the fact simply goes to show that the building had no plan worthy of honor.

The window-space is therefore always to be preserved for window use — just such and just so much as the architect gave us. The use of a window (barring for the moment the unscientific one of ventilation) is to give light while still affording shelter. And this light-space is also to serve artistically as a kind of balance to the dark space of the solid

wall; hence this light-space is to art sacred, and must be permitted to the end to assert itself as just what it is and such as it is, so much rightly apportioned and correctly proportioned translucent wall-space.

When this window-space has been first filled with a plain glass, which is then to give way to stained glass, the new treatment must say, just as obviously, only more beautifully, what the old said: it must still be a window—letting in light, though now the light is colored—and in its architectural value it must be just what it was before, asserting the shape and the design of the structural window, plainly and faithfully.

In other words, the true stained glass window—in a church building worthy of that name—is not now to give the beholder the impression that he is looking out through an opening and seeing, of something beyond, so much as the size of the opening will permit: in a word, the spectacular impression of looking into some beautiful out-door world through a hole in the wall. The beholder must be conscious still of looking at the wall itself, the translucent part of it, which confines him within the edifice as much as the stone or the brick. Nor yet is the true stained glass window merely a colored glass picture covering so much wall area: the outline form is to be so

obvious, and the treatment so non-realistic, that the architectural idea may never for a moment be in danger of submersion under some other idea.

For, as is true in general of decorative art as contrasted with pictorial art, the true church window is to be designed without perspective, without shadow, without attempt at realistic effect. It is to be conventional, symbolical; with that intent it may utilize as it will forms, colors, attitudes, postures, accessories, fearless of the criticism that 'this saint or that scene never in the world looked like that.' No intelligent person standing before decorative painting would for a moment think of demanding a representation of the actual. That, frankly, was not its object.

And the stained glass church window will further fulfill its particular end if all round the figure or group, or whatever be the subject matter of the composition, there runs a clear line or border of differently colored glass, making a clear demarcation from the stone wall; drawing again, as it were, the architect's line of his window construction.

All of which is but to say that windows were made for the sake of the building, and so must remain; not that a building was made for the sake of windows,—for the sake of furnishing so much space for

so many square yards of somebody's beautiful glass. Which ought to be self-evident, though to many persons it is not.

So regarding it now, the further question naturally occurs as to the treatment of the several windows of one particular church. For, each individual window might be in itself correct according to the above principles, and yet the total effect sadly lacking in unity and harmony.

There is first of all the consideration of style: a difficult matter to define, yet not, after all, so difficult to determine. What ought certainly not to determine it is the chance ability of some wealthy donor or donors to pay for the costliest work that could be produced; nor, on the other hand, the limited ability of others who could give only something inexpensive. The style of the building and its general character must determine the degree of splendor and ornateness which will be right for each and all the windows. If there be wealth to do still more, then exercise sober self-restraint. If there be available means only to do part of what the building demands, better do just so much as can be rightly and adequately done, though the scheme should wait many years for its entire completion. In building a new church, let this also be thought of in advance.

Then there is the question of a single scheme of subjects for all the windows, so that all when completed shall tell, chapter by chapter, one great story, or part by part, one great truth: say, the Christian Faith, or the Redemption of Man, or the Sacramental Economy of Grace, or the History of Religion, or the Mission of the Church in the World. Thus again, as in old time, will the church windows instruct the people, and the sum total of that instruction will be a unity, with harmony and interrelation of parts, of the utmost value to sound Christian thinking and feeling, and to symmetry of Christian character. For it is just this which our modern religion so much lacks: the sad result of sectarian thinking and teaching, where each hath a doctrine, a truth, and few the whole doctrine and the wholeness of truth.

Individualism, let us realize, is not what the Church should foster: though individuality, in its rightful place, be precious and sacred. The application here is not fanciful. Sadly absurd examples there are, where ecclesiastical art has been pressed into service by sectarian minds (not among the sects alone) to teach some one portion or fragment of truth through the eye every time the eye gazed upon the interior of the house of worship and fell upon the favorite symbol or picture.

But not this alone. Individualism is rampant in our day in the form of utterly arbitrary choice of subjects, as well as of their mode of treatment in point of material, color, scale of drawing, and — expensiveness. A Babel of confusion is the result, and that in some of our foremost churches, which have become thereby rather picture galleries or museums adapted to the study of all schools and all tastes, than restful, devotional, solemnizing and uplifting temples for the worship of Almighty God. A low motive ruled, and how can one help feeling it as one looks upon the performance? — here the wealthy donor, or the ambitious so-called artist, forgetting Whose this House was, demanded worship for himself. “Verily, they have their reward.”

Therefore let those who have such things in charge study first of all what a church should be, and then what their particular church, such as they have received it in trust, is. It will often be found that a building very little esteemed has something to say for itself, and is worthy of respect as originally conceived, in its own structural character as designed by its architect. And if not, and if it must be borne with, then all the more reason, in planning to do anything further in it or upon it, to “abhor that which is evil, and cleave to that which is good.”

And after such careful study, determine (before the first enthusiast has an opportunity to put into some one window chosen at random a "most superb" production of the much advertised glass man) determine in advance what should be your total result when every window shall have been filled with stained glass: what story the whole shall tell, how best its parts may be distributed, what each part shall be, in what style, what design, what scale of drawing, scheme of color.

And when this has been determined, in the fear of God, in soberness of judgment, in conscientious fidelity to a sacred trust, with a willingness to be judged by a wiser posterity,—then let such a plan be adhered to as a law of the Medes and Persians which altereth not. To sacrifice one window to the seductions of some alien grandeur is to sacrifice the whole principle at stake. The plain glass patiently awaiting its time to give way to the right thing is more eloquent of a truly reverent and truly artistic intention than a medley of incongruous splendors.

And now, what is stained glass? This simple question it is of the utmost importance to answer, because a little familiarity with the materials and the methods of workmanship will itself serve as a

guide to the choice of good windows and to the avoidance of bad.

Stained glass, then, is simply glass which has been colored in the pot, glass which has its color within itself: while painted glass—a term sometimes used as synonymous with stained glass—is properly glass which has had the color painted upon its surface, and has then been fired so that the colored or enameled surface has been vitrified. Some stained glass is of so deep a color,—red, for instance—that a thin coating of it blown over the surface of a white (that is, colorless) glass is sufficient to produce the desired color effect; if the entire thickness of the pane were of the colored glass, the effect would be much too dark: such glass is nevertheless true stained glass, and is called “ flashed.”

In the early period of the art, beginning in the eleventh century and running parallel with the development of Pointed (commonly called Gothic) Architecture, only true stained glass was used. The use of enamel paints applied to the surface to produce a different color marks also the beginning of the decadence of the art; for the glory of true glass is in its jewel-like quality, its color being within itself and all absolutely translucent, while a painted glass will always be necessarily dull in comparison. The temptation to paint color upon the surface

of glass is readily understood: it was an easier method, it promised wider scope, greater variety, in a word, the opportunity to make pictures somewhat as the painter may upon canvas. But glass is not canvas, and church windows are not to be pictures. Retribution has overtaken this work, and the latest and most ambitious more speedily than all; the enamel-painted glass has not stood the test of time, becoming muddy and perishing while the true ancient stained glass is still the joy and wonder of all who gaze upon it.

For, as we have said, the glory of true stained glass is in its rich, jewel-like color. Its reds, which the makers called "ruby," its blues which they called "sapphire," with its "emerald" greens, its "gold" and its "pearl," never entered the field to compete with the achievements of the painter's brush; to compare the delight they afford the beholder with that derived from a painting would be in a sense as impossible as a comparison between the fragrance of a flower and the cadence of a song.

The early makers of stained glass windows contended with great, to moderns they would be intolerable, limitations. They were almost absolutely restricted to the primary colors. They had not at first the art of blowing glass, but cast their pieces in small panes of at most four

or five inches in diameter. The use of the diamond in cutting was not known till the sixteenth century. Hence their work was simply mosaic. For variety they depended upon an arrangement of geometrical patterns, or patterns of familiar architectural form and of common ecclesiastical symbols. To construct these they leaded together their pieces and bits of glass, elaborating their treatment as time went on, but always in the main upon the same lines.

When they began to portray, in panels on their windows, the forms of Our Lord, of His apostles, of saints and angels, sometimes in crude settings of scenes or incidents from Holy Scripture or Church legend, their color principle was still the same; and it was still the same in the elaboration of the merely ornamental borders with forms of leaf or flower or fruit, or of sacred emblems and inscriptions. The brown pigment with which they produced faces and features, hands, feet, outlines and ornamentations, was not a color, nor intended for a color, but simply a means of definition or delineation when this was too minute to be carried out with leads. And the stained glass it was, still, which addressed the eye and compelled attention and admiration. No more than in heraldry did the forms and emblems pretend to be pictures of the actual, realistic representations of

men, or of scenes or incidents. The makers of early stained glass were, in one word, simply makers of ornamental windows of rich color and religious symbolism.

We have said that their pieces of glass were small. This is but to say that their windows were a network of leads. For there is but one way to hold together such pieces of glass in a window, and that is by leads. These leads are not a misfortune. A square yard of simple red stained glass is artistically more beautiful if composed of a hundred pieces leaded together than if it were in a single sheet. The differences in texture themselves produce a better result, and the black leads, scarcely discernible individually, contribute an additional element of pleasure. And in arranging pieces of different color side by side, intelligent leading design was itself the artist's drawing, and effected results altogether admirable. So far was this art of leading carried in France, for instance, that windows mainly of white glass were produced, of rare beauty by simple virtue of their structural design.

All this was changed by the men who in a later age ground up their enamel pigments, glazed windows in large panes, and daubed upon them their muddy colors, with a sublime contempt for the crude laborious mosaic work of their pre-

decessors. Would they have a representation of the earth for their figure to stand upon? it must be carpeted with grass, with green grass, and they can paint green grass upon a colorless surface; red flowers also, upon the same, with red paint, if such were desired. The Renaissance was coming; Gothic was barbarous anyway; antiquated crudities must give place to refined work worthy of the new enlightenment! Paint a picture on canvas, then paint that picture on your glass. It can be done, certainly, if you will not allow yourself to be bothered with the nuisance of leads, but just get an ample pane of glass, unobstructed, and go at it with your brush and paints!

This miserable travesty did not long hold sway, it was scarcely permitted to go its own theoretical length. There came great political changes, great religious changes, and for a long time few churches more were built, nor even those standing kept in repair. The course of Ecclesiastical Architecture suffered an interruption for several centuries, of which Mr. Ralph Adams Cram has told us feelingly in his recent writings on that subject.

But within the memory of men now living there has also come the beginning of a true revival. The awakening of the

Catholic spirit in the Anglican Communion has been accompanied by an eager desire to recover lost treasures and to restore sound traditions to their former honor.

And naturally all this has shown itself in the cultivation of Stained Glass also. As we have said, what is needed above all else is knowledge, to guide us to what is really good and worthy.

No sooner is any want of the public made evident than enterprising trade springs up to supply that want. If you want colored church windows, you can have them to-day at a trifle per square yard by purchasing a beautifully printed paper, of genuine ecclesiastical design, and pasting it upon your present windows. From this most abysmal horror of vulgarity you may pass through various successive gradations of so-called stained glass, all supplied by trade. If you pass on to the costliest, you are not thereby sure to obtain what is not horrible and vulgar, when regarded from the point of view of true Stained Glass, of Architectural Art, and of Religion.

There are at this moment three rather diverse schools of Stained Glass most in evidence before those who seek and are willing to pay for honest art work; the English, the German, and the American. Their comparative merits are nowhere, to our knowledge, presented in a fair mind-

ed way; the makers of each claim superior excellence for their own, of course; if, indeed, they ever intimate to the public that there is any other kind at all. It should be said, however, that there is great merit in the best examples of each school; and that none of these schools can fairly be judged by the inferior stuff which is put out under its name, for each of them is defamed by such stuff.

The English school naturally had, and still has, great prestige among Churchmen. Taking it at its best, as for instance in the work of Mr. Henry Holiday, it is simple and vigorous in drawing, varied and harmonious in color, churchly in spirit, while free from mediævalism. The English artist believes in stained glass, glass which has its color within itself; and good glass, the best he can obtain. His glass is flat, that is, of even surface and equal thickness. He believes in painting upon this glass, and upon, one may say, every piece and bit of it; but he does not paint a color upon it, he simply shades it, draws folds of drapery, patterns of fabrics, details of ornamentations; always, however, aiming to leave it, however much so painted, with the color of the glass gleaming and glittering: that is, he does not daub over the surface, but puts on mere lines, and picks out lights, so that his painted piece of green glass, let us say, is still green glass,

only with design upon it, or texture, or light and shade. He feels that only in this way has he done all which as an artist he is conscientiously bound to do; and he accounts a piece of mere stained glass which has not felt the brush at all, which has not had the touch of the conscious art of the maker, a poor thing, in a sort, crude and barbaric.

In the hands of a master—and there have been great masters in the English school—the results of this method have been very fine. But even so the fact remains that every line and every particle of even neutral pigment upon the surface of glass obscures so much light; which is to say, it detracts so much from its brilliancy and splendor. The fact is undeniable that the total effect of some great window of this school will be charming, but withal just a little dull; the richness which gleams and glitters from it is yet half hidden as by some fluttering veil before it. Such work at its best is exquisite; it is devotional; it is soothing; but hardly gives one a thrill of gladness. In the hands of a master, it is a fit medium for strong individuality of a good kind, as witness Burne-Jones' windows executed at the works of William Morris. In the hands of the common multitude of English makers, it degenerates into a wearisome, conventional repetition of stiff figures, draped in the same damask stuffs,

with the same wooden little flowers growing up around their feet, the whole surrounded by the same easily managed conventional border.

Of the German glass, commonly called Munich glass, it is sufficient for our purpose to say that it is in principle the same as the English. It relies much upon the brush. It is more in the mediæval spirit than the English; its feeling is that of a simply traditional, not a modern, devoutness. Its inspiration is Italian. Its colors are more predominately the old primary colors. Its decorative features are strictly conventional, and applied in a mechanical spirit. In warmth, in splendor of color, German windows at their best are superior to the English.

American glass is not simply glass made in America. The term denotes a new method, which yet is, in the main, a restoration of the very oldest method, reinforced on its own lines by modern resources. Mr. John La Farge is its distinguished pioneer.

American glass is true stained glass; but it is not glass of even surface and of equal thickness.* By its inequality of thickness the American artist effects what the English artist accomplishes by brushing dark lines upon his even glass; or he leads strips and pieces of glass on

* The earliest glass was not glass of even surface and equal thickness. Therein lies one of its charms.

the back of his window to intensify and deepen his color, as in folds of drapery and the like. He paints nothing except faces, hands and feet; all the rest he binds himself to obtain by the mosaic method. He cannot obtain by the mosaic method everything that the English artist obtains by the brush; but he feels that he obtains all which in a window is necessary, and by patient, thoroughly artistic work he obtains what upon study proves marvelous; and he has all his glass free to exhibit the full glory of glass. His very necessities compel him to compose in the true way, that is by lead lines; he is back upon first principles in this respect. The lead lines mark the structural lines of his drawing. But he has still to contend with the necessity of painting his flesh parts; and of overcoming the break between their flatness, between the dull hardness of painted faces, hands and feet, and the splendid jewel-like strength of all the rest of his window. The best he can do is to make this transition as little abrupt as possible.

Needless to say, the American school has its dangers. The ease with which an ignorant eye may be imposed upon by great pieces of folded glass instead of conscientiously selected and leaded strips and pieces, is a snare, into which it is not necessary for an honest artist to fall. When, however, a customer demands

something cheap, he can obtain it in so-called American glass, and it will be cheap enough. There has been also a deplorable tendency among some prominent American glass makers toward startling theatrical effects. Of unchurchly windows, windows hopelessly and utterly unchurchly, the great majority doubtless are of the American school; nor are they the windows which have cost the least money. Novel and indescribable colors, as far removed as possible from all sober, reverent, devotional feeling, have been employed; effects have been sought which actually destroy all the value of the window as what it was designed by its architect, a window in a sacred edifice. And by the wide heralding of such performances, as if American glass meant simply this sort of thing, American glass has forfeited that just appreciation which in its essential principles it so richly merits. Let the American school remember that a window in a church is and forever must remain just a window, subservient that is, to the architecture of the church; let it design in the spirit of worshipful, reverent, dignified, sober devotion; let it compose with technical conscientiousness and love its leads and spare no labor; let it choose thoroughly good glass, and glass of predominantly the glorious colors so long honorable, eschewing startling and meretricious effects: and there will,

to our mind, be no doubt of its being the Stained Glass of the future.

But, to our thinking, one thing cannot safely be done; and that is the placing of English and American, or Munich and American glass side by side in the same building. Let it be the one or the other; when you have chosen which it shall be, adhere to that. To mingle the schools in the same edifice will be sure to prove fatal to the best effects of each.

And before placing any permanent stained glass, again let us say, study the subject; see all the windows you can; and make haste slowly.



STAINED GLASS WINDOWS

For Grace Church, Lockport.

A Report to the Vestry of the Parish by its Rector, January 5, 1897.

After many months of inquiry, reflection, special study, and such visits to churches as opportunity afforded, we are at last in a position to bring together the facts bearing upon this important project, and to submit the results for your consideration.

Grace Church,* Lockport, is an edifice which though not striking or ornate, is in point of architectural merit, of conspicuous importance in the community, in probable permanence and enduring interest second to none in our city. Erected more than forty years ago, of stone, its interior chastely beautified and enriched at successive periods; its nave alone over one hundred feet long, forty-six feet wide, fifty feet high; its lofty chancel with a window twenty-two feet in height, nearly ten feet in width: it impresses the educated eye on entering it as beautiful and churchly, characterized by simple grace and reverent dignity, and the exclusion of the tawdry and incongruous. We may honestly admit some faults. What building, religious or other, is without them? But it is a church which grows upon us the longer we worship in it; it becomes homelike to us, and yet excites our admiration the more as we become better acquainted with it.

* The design was one of Richard Upjohn's.

This is the building which is committed to our care. Not only that we keep it clean and in repair, warmed and lighted, not only that we preserve the fabric as a valuable piece of property; but that continuing to labor in the spirit of those who have preceded us, we secure such further additions to it as will tend to make it complete in its kind.

We say, complete in its kind. And it is our sacred duty, therefore, to understand what it is that we already have, as well as to ask what further gifts and further embellishments might add thereto. For to add, with the best intention and with lavish generosity, but without an understanding of the conditions and limitations imposed by the existing edifice, might easily result in such disastrous incongruity as a future generation, if not ours, would deplore. The land is full of warning examples, and one is at times appalled to think of the vast sums embodied in worse than waste, from which our better educated descendants after us will suffer in the years to come. Knowledge is bound to grow; travel and study cannot fail to make an understanding of these things the common property of intelligent Church people as time goes on. And it is a grave responsibility to be at the head of a parish in which permanent work is undertaken and executed, work on which the future is to pronounce judgment. This responsibility, let me add, your rector for one feels very seriously and deeply.

A very common form of architectural enrichment in this day of growing wealth and of increasing commemoration of the departed is that of stained glass windows. No memorial can be more beautiful than this when wisely planned and well executed. None can be much more painful or incessantly offensive when inartistic, incongruous, or lacking in the true devotional spirit.

And as touching our own case, it is reasonably certain that offers will be made to place such windows in Grace Church. It would be ungenerous to decline them. Moreover, we cannot escape the moral obligation of directing what such memorials shall be, so far as the building itself, its style of architecture, its uses, and its history, shall impose the conditions. It is not a question of dictating to intending donors: for the vestry to decline to exercise such control would be for us to fail of a sacred trust.

Our church, we may be most thankful to bear in mind, is built in a style pure and self-consistent, plain as it is. It is Early English, of the first and simplest of the periods of Gothic. To treat it as if it were of some other style, in any changes or additions we might see fit to make hereafter, would be to do violence to the edifice, to wrong its intelligent and loving builders in the days of good Bishop De Lancey, and those who shall inherit it after we are gone. There is meaning and purpose in it, as it is: in every line of it, in every arch, every dimension, every grouping and distribution of parts.

We are not at liberty, therefore, to change the window openings, in size or form, unless indeed we wish to rebuild the church. We may at our taste reconstruct the windows in the houses in which we live, but we cannot alter the style of these windows without destroying the style of the architecture. The series of long narrow lancets, no matter how long or how narrow, are right; and with all their severe simplicity, their beauty of outline and their grace and dignity grow upon one the more they are studied. Mediæval builders had a meaning even in putting such windows in pairs; it may seem to us a little fantastic, but as they made everything symbolical, so in this grouping they symbolized our Lord's sending out His Apostles two and two. Apart from such a consideration, there is a quiet grace in this

long succession of lancet pairs which may safely be left to speak for itself.

The development of window forms is itself very interesting, and should be understood before an attempt is made to treat any church windows in particular. Mrs. Van Rensselaer, who has done so much to make the English cathedrals known in this country, thus traces the successive steps from style to style: "Fancy first a plain tall window with a round-arched head; then the round exchanged for a pointed head; then two, or three, or five perhaps, of these pointed windows set close together; and then a projecting moulding in the shape of an arch drawn around them, including them all and thus including, of necessity, a plain piece of wall above their heads. Then fancy this piece of wall pierced with a few small openings, and we have a group of connected lights in which, as a plant in its embryo, lies the promise of all after-development. . . .

"The small lights in the upper field enlarge and multiply until they form a connected pattern which fills its whole area, and the jambs of the main lights diminish into narrow strips or very slender columns. The great arch, which in the first place did but encircle the windows, thus becomes itself the window—the 'plate-traceried' window which was richly developed in early French Gothic, but less richly in English, owing to the persistent local love for mere groups of lancets. Then all the stone-work shrinks still farther—the columnar character of the uprights is lost, and the flat surfaces between the upper openings change into mouldings of complex section. Thus the original tall lights and upper piercings surrender their last claim to independence; the uprights are no longer jambs or bits of wall but mullions, the arch-head is filled with genuine traceries, and all the elements of the design are vitally fused together within the

sweep of the great window to form its multiple yet organic beauty."

The art of making stained glass windows went hand in hand with this development of architectural forms through the eleventh, twelfth, thirteenth and succeeding centuries. It has indeed been called the "principal branch of Mediæval Art;" but was always treated as absolutely subservient to the particular architecture itself. A most eminent authority denies that the art of glass-staining has ever been lost. Glass itself was used by Christians in their churches from the earliest church-building times; the distinct art of painting on glass emerges, one might say, with the springing up of pointed architecture, though the beginnings show themselves in Norman architecture in the eleventh century. Four centuries the two arts flourished side by side; with the decadence of the greater came also the decline of the subsidiary; a poorer taste in building was naturally accompanied by a poorer taste in glass. With the revival of interest in those long-neglected periods of noble achievement, the Oxford movement of Church Restoration giving men the religious guiding principles for an intelligent appreciation of the forms of Mediæval art, church building and glass staining were brought back again, the one with the other. And whether such restoration can leave us satisfied with the mere recovery of the riches of by-gone ages, or must mean also, as I believe, the development of what the present can contribute in a reverent but not slavish spirit—certain it is that the first step is to understand the past, to find out what was done in the great formative and classic periods, why it was done as it was and not otherwise, in a word, to master the models before we proceed on our own course; and, as I said before, to remember to which period and style our own edifice belongs.

It was my good fortune when recently in the

city of Philadelphia, to obtain access to a rare work over which I spent some very delightful hours. Its author was a William Warrington, himself a designer and producer of windows, and a reverent student of ancient examples, who published his great folio in London, in 1848. From him I learned many things about the beginnings and progress of the art. Great were the difficulties of the eleventh century pioneers. They had to contend with defective methods of manufacture; not understanding glass-blowing they fused their glass in pots and crucibles, and cast it to about the required shape, in pieces not more than four or five inches in diameter. Cutting with the diamond was not known till the sixteenth century. They designed and made and erected their own work. When great orders were to be executed, artists were brought together from the different countries, and by a sort of "free-masonry" they worked together in perfect agreement as to styles, rules, and principles.

In the course of time, different countries produced slightly differing schools.

As in heraldry, the colors of the glass were intended for colors of precious stones; the representations of figures and objects were not meant to be pictures, but being also strictly symbolical, the drawing was conventional, with no intention to reproduce nature in color, or form, or position and perspective. The figures which excite ridicule on the part of one who is without the clue, justify themselves by this principle; nor is it quite true to say the men of that time did not know how to draw—their ability in this respect was not that of artists to-day, but if their object had been to produce a figure or a scene for the sole purpose of a picture, they might certainly and would certainly have given us something very different from what they did. While the small separate pieces are often very minutely

pencilled, all such work being afterward burned in — there is no “shadowing,” as in a picture, supposing the light to fall from a certain direction; but a kind of “relief” shading, making the view suitable to any aspect. In a word, the drawing is the same as in MSS., tapestries and heraldic designs. Ruby and sapphire were the ground colors. And in all the work the primitive colors were adhered to.

In York Minister there is to be found the largest and finest specimen of thirteenth century glass in England in a group of lancets known as the “Five Sisters.” The lancets are each six feet wide and fifty feet high, and each divided into thirteen compartments or squares of different patterns. Their designs being largely of an ornamental character, they escaped destruction by the Puritans.

It is a curious fact that English stained glass at no time had large figures. In the thirteenth century Continental art in this respect diverged from ancient and English, under Italian influence.

In the Cathedral of Bourges there are one hundred and eighty-three stained glass windows, executed from the thirteenth century downwards. The early lancets have figures occupying the larger part of the window, sometimes fifteen or twenty feet high; over each figure a sort of canopy or tabernacle disproportionately small, and under it a kind of pedestal or base about a foot high. Around the margin is the finest work in the windows, in a broad band of mosaic.

Cologne Cathedral has four lancets each eleven times its width in height, filled with early glass of this period; the figures in the windows are in height one-third the height of the lancet, with a canopy above them.

The developments of the centuries following are of less interest to our present purpose. Suffice it to say that even in the rich Decorated

Style of Architecture the treatment of individual windows was not what we might term ambitious: the effect was secured by not attempting too much in a single window, but by producing a rich harmony with subordination of each to the whole. In the Perpendicular Style which followed, in the fifteenth century, while there was a very abundant production of glass, its quality was inferior, and much white glass was used. Figures with canopies were used when the single openings were one foot wide and upward; panels, when they were considerably larger; and to fill the extreme length, story upon story. And there begins to appear a tendency to conform the glass less to the architecture itself.

From the sixteenth century on there is marked decay. The attempts to treat glass like canvas prove an entire failure. A voluptuous and sensual school of painting came in, debasing a religious art, which thus became secularized, and almost disappeared. The destruction of fine ancient examples in the Puritan revolution left England very poor, and the little that remained came to be less and less appreciated.

Curiously enough, large importations of glass consequent on the French Revolution with its destruction of churches, put into the hands of English churchmen what the religious revival of the Church soon taught them to appreciate once more, and so it is that to-day England is enriching her cathedrals and churches with restorations and new windows; and from her the impulse has naturally come to our own land also. But the production of stained glass is in America of very recent date.

From facts like the foregoing we may conclude that the subject is one of importance and involving so much that it is well that we should proceed cautiously in the placing of stained glass in Grace Church.

But shall we encourage such a movement at all?

It seems to me that this is the moment supremely opportune for us to inaugurate a scheme of window treatment such as shall glorify our house of God more and more till it reaches completion. How long it may take to reach completion is in a sense immaterial. That we should begin now, and make every step a right one, is the great matter.

The practical question is, Shall we choose to admit one or a few striking windows into this edifice, windows which may have no relation to each other, produced possibly by methods or on principles entirely at variance, in color-schemes discordant, in scale of drawing entirely dissimilar and unequal: or shall we guide intending donors to such gifts as shall be a satisfaction and a delight forever, beautiful each in itself, but more beautiful still when assembled? This I take it is the question. For I believe windows will be placed, whether we encourage it or not, within a decade, possibly much sooner. And when I put the question thus, it appears to me there is but one answer possible.

Let us then get down to the practical details in the matter. Leaving the great chancel window entirely out of consideration, we have five pairs of lancets of equal size on either side of the nave, and a sixth, smaller pair over the doors in continuation of the series up to the chancel. We have further, the magnificent group of three lancets at the foot of the nave, with a fourth lancet a little smaller, and still much larger than those in the pairs already referred to.

Here is a considerable number of windows—twenty-nine when we count in the chancel window; what an opportunity for discord and artistic anarchy! Let us say, rather, what a remarkable and rare opportunity for the production of a rich and hallowed splendor, fitted not only to

express the consecration of man's gifts to God, but to instruct the minds and quicken the devotions of generations to come.

The objection which most readily offers itself when stained glass is proposed for Grace Church is that the twenty lancets at the sides are so extremely narrow and so very high that nothing can be done with them. If by 'doing something' is meant putting in scenes with several or many figures, it is most true. The breadth of wall between the two windows constituting the pair is so large that the scene could not be carried from the one to the other. But surely that does not exhaust the possibilities. The openings are wide enough to permit the treatment of single figures in full life-size if desired; figures with canopies, borders, and panels at the base, as in the best periods of ancient glass. The breadth of these openings is twenty-one inches; six inches more than that of the small pair erected All Saints, 1895, at the side of the pulpit, in which the figures are certainly of dignified stature, and by no means poor in back ground and accessories. If such results are possible in a space fifteen inches wide and six feet high; how much more in a space twenty-one inches wide and thirteen feet high.

Single figures, therefore, are demanded by the conditions which govern us, for the side lancets; unless we rest content with geometrical, or flower windows, or windows bearing emblems, more or less ornately bordered. I venture to say that at this stage of our history, when we are not pressed to fill our window-openings with whatever may be obtainable, we desire the best that can be had. This best, for the side lancets is,—single figures, with canopy, border and base panel.

Mr. F. S. Lamb of New York, who designed the beautiful work erected a year ago, has prepared and sent me two pairs of colored sketches,

suggesting a noble and beautiful form which in the execution would, of course, far surpass what appears in the drawings. They are submitted for your careful study, and may be seen at any time in my library.

What then shall the figures be? Shall they be chosen at random? Artistically speaking, this might not be so disastrous, provided the same artist drew all the designs and controlled the execution, so that the scale of drawing and the scheme of color were kept in accord. And that is a great deal more than can be said of some of the principal churches in our greatest cities, where immense sums have been spent on these works. No; there is something better still, open to us. It is a serial treatment, with unity, and progress: so that the whole, when complete, shall tell one great story, each part a chapter therein; the whole impress one truth, each part contributing somewhat to the cumulative force of the great lesson.

And, not to detain you with all the processes of thought and long reflection by which at last we reach our conclusion—the figures we suggest are those which are conspicuous and representative in the Old and New Testaments. Our Divine Lord Himself should be, as He is, exalted in the great window over the altar. Beginning from the angle of the chancel arch to pass around the church, we come first to the pair of small windows next to the organ, from which now the light is excluded by the parish building. They may be taken as in a sense going with the organ, and scarcely a part of the general scheme. Let them be treated, at some time, in mosaic, with SINGING ANGELS,* thus corresponding to the Angels directly opposite in the corresponding small windows. Then we pass to the first pair of lancets of uniform size, MELCHIZEDEK and ABRAHAM: the latter the great father of the

* Recently placed.

faithful, the head of the covenant people; the former even superior to him, a priest forever, without beginning or end of days, type of our Lord's own Highpriesthood. Melchizedek appears before Abraham, bearing bread and wine, foreshadowing of the Holy Eucharist. What more suitable, as we look up to the altar and see above it the figure of Our Blessed Lord, than to turn to the head of the nave, and find here, at the dawn of religious history, standing out as type of the Christ in whom the course of the ages shall culminate, this King of Salem at the very beginning?

We pass on. The next pair will be MOSES and SAMUEL: both conspicuous as appointed of God to lead, to rule, to judge the people whom God had chosen; Founders of Israel as a nation. Surely these, if any, we must commemorate as among the greatest in the covenant history.

This brings us to the third or middle pair. Woman, too, bears her conspicuous part in the spiritual history of mankind. DEBORAH* judged Israel for forty years in a period of disorder and confusion, and led the way to victory: RUTH,* a very different type, beautiful and gentle, became one of that line of whom David, and David's Greater Son, were born. Other women might have been chosen, as well as other men; but on the whole, none more typical, none better fitted to instruct and to impress.

The fourth pair continues the narrative. DAVID and ELIJAH, each so striking in his way, bring back the kingdom in its glory and the kingdom in its disaster; religion sweetly ministrant with music, and religion sternly denouncing national sin; the royal harp, and the prophetic mantle.

And finally, the fifth pair on this side, ISAIAH and MALACHI: the greatest of all the prophets, called the Evangelist of the Old Testament; and

* Now in place.

the last of seers, who most clearly foretold both Messiah and Forerunner.

Thus we arrive at one of the entrances, and turning the corner, we stand before the first of the windows at the lower end. It is large enough to admit more than one figure. It continues the story from Malachi, to him who went before the face of the Lord: it presents to us ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST,* baptizing at Jordan; and close by it stands the Font with its summons, as of old, to the washing away of sins.

A splendid opportunity is presented by the great group next in order, the three associated windows piercing the end wall of the nave. Majestic in their simple dignity of outline, what will they not be when filled with stained glass as they should be? Here is space, indeed—ample room for that scene treatment of which the side-wall windows are incapable.

Let the middle one, which is much the largest, be the NATIVITY;† that on the right side (next to St. John Baptist) the PRESENTATION IN THE TEMPLE,† with Simeon's Nunc Dimittis; that on the left side, the EPIPHANY,† with the Gifts of the Magi. Thus will this entire end-wall set forth the Incarnation, up to which the Old Testament has led us, and out of which proceeds the New, and all the history of the Christian Church.

Turning again, and passing on, back once more toward the chancel, the first and second pairs of lancets on the Cottage Street side are devoted to the four Evangelists, STS. MATTHEW, MARK, LUKE and JOHN. No explanation is needed of the propriety of putting these figures here. Not only as the biographers of the Lord Jesus Christ, but as chief Founders of that Church which is builded upon Historic Facts—men of deeds as well as writers—we commemorate them.

* To be erected in the near future. † Now in place.

The middle pair is again given to two great women of the New Testament, mothers both and as mothers supremely great: ST. ELIZABETH* and ST. MARY.* Of the son of the first one it was said, Among those born of women there hath not appeared a greater than John. To the other the Angel's word was, Hail, thou that are highly favored: the Lord is with thee; and blessed art thou among women. No two characters can lay more claim to our gratitude and reverence than these two women to whom an Allwise God entrusted the tender formative years of the Forerunner and of the Messiah.

There is indeed a glorious company of Apostles, and a noble army of martyrs, whom one would gladly set forth, two and two, in goodly succession. Two pairs must suffice us: first ST. ANDREW* and ST. STEPHEN,* next ST. PETER* and ST. PAUL.* We begin with ST. ANDREW, for he readily obeyed the calling of Christ and followed Him without delay, bringing his brother also: type of self-devotion and personal service, forever. ST. STEPHEN, set apart for the Church's charitable work, filled with the Holy Ghost and a mighty preacher,—he was the first Deacon, and became the first Martyr. ST. PETER and ST. PAUL bring us to a climax in the Church's realization of the great commission; prince apostles, the former first led to the Gentiles but afterward distinctly charged with the Gospel to the Circumcision; the latter sent out to the Uncircumcision, truest champion of a Catholic Faith and uncompromising leader of a Catholic Church. He brings us, as we pass the two Angel figures over the door, up to the pulpit,—who fitter than he to be set always before the preacher?—and thence again we see before us the altar and the figure of Our Blessed Lord from which we started on our circuit;

* Now in place.

“Christ is the end, for Christ was the beginning: Christ the beginning, and the end is Christ.”

This is the scheme which is hereby recommended to your attentive consideration, your criticism, and if worthy, your adoption. When adopted, each opening will be available only for the subject assigned to it, treated in the best style, under the direction and approval of the vestry. Windows may be erected in any order, provided these conditions are complied with; though it is highly desirable that not less than a pair—where there are pairs—should be placed at a time. It is immaterial how many persons join in donating a window. The use of the windows for memorials is very beautiful and very desirable; but there is no restriction to such use, by anything in the scheme.

And in closing let it be added, that if—as undoubtedly they will—the vestry and parish shall feel sincerely thankful to those who participate in this pious work, it is not there that the gratitude should chiefly lie. It is an unspeakable privilege to be permitted to place a memorial like this in the house of God, bringing ever new comfort and joy to hearts bereaved, and satisfaction to the donors; yes, if there is need to say it, it is an honor to be permitted to do it. Moreover, in the nature of the case, it is a privilege very limited as to the number of those who can be so favored; and with every window that is taken, the number remaining available becomes rapidly less.

The above Report with its Recommendations was adopted, entire, by unanimous vote of the Vestry at the regular monthly meeting, January 5, 1897.

HECKMAN

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